**The Iona School for Ministry**

**Gospel of John**

First Year

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**Reading and Study Guide**

**Assigned Reading**: DeSilva, *Introduction to the New Testament*, Chapter 9,

“The Gospel According to John.”

Kittredge, *Conversations with Scripture*: The Gospel of John.

1. The most important reading is reading the Gospel of John itself. However, **read DeSilva's chapter first** to help you notice themes as you read John.

2. **Read John,** but first, read over the following questions. Take note of what you find in John which addresses the following (you may take actual notes, of just be keep your eyes peeled for them):

 THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

- What are Jesus' "I AM" sayings, in John? What is the significance of these sayings? (see DeSilva, pp. 424-427).

- Identify and note the verse which claims to be from an eyewitness, and mark all the passages that refer to “the disciple whom Jesus loved.”

- Read John 1:1-18 carefully. What do you notice about the sequence of verses? How would you sketch or diagram the movement of the prologue? Think about the beginning of John and compare it with what you have learned about the beginnings of Mark, Matthew, and Luke.

- OPTIONAL: Look up and read some of the texts describing Wisdom cited in Kittredge, p. 24. How does a comparison with Wisdom/Sophia shed light on Jesus, as described in John 1?

- What is the role of John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel? Why is that important?

- What is the general “world view” of the gospel of John? What are some of the implications of seeing the world in this way? What does Jesus do for people, according to this world view?

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- What do you think the gospel means by “eternal life’? What passages do you use to think about that question?

- How is the Holy Spirit portrayed in this gospel? See DeSilva pp. 430-433. What is the significance of that portrait?

- Imagine a Christian community whose paradigmatic moment of remembrance of Jesus is *foot washing*. What do you think is important to that community? Is it different than a community whose gospels narrate the Last Supper? How is it similar? Where is the “eucharist” in John, if anywhere?

- Read John 7 and 8. How would you describe the interpretive problems posed by these episodes?

- What is John’s view of the source of authority for leadership? What are other views of authority in the New Testament that you have seen? What is important about John’s view? What are the difficulties?

- Women play significant roles in John’s gospel. Who are the important women and what do the stories about them say about faith, or community, or ministry?

- Who are some the key characters in the gospel, and how do they illustrate or exemplify faith?

- What does this gospel contribute to our understanding of early Christianity? What does it say about Jesus? Does it disagree with Matthew, Mark, or Luke? Do you think it is “the spiritual gospel”? What does that mean?